

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 311141 TOSEC 130073
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 311141 TOSEC 130073

EXDIS

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM JERUSALEM DATED DECEMBER 31,
1977 SENT SECSTATE WASHDC INFO AMMAN, BEIRUT, CAIRO,
DMAASCUS, JIDDA KUWAIT, TEL AVIV, USUN NEW YORK IS REPEATED
TO YOU: QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 2263

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MOPS, PBOR, XF, IS, LE

SUBJ: INCREASED MILITARY ACTIVITY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON

1. UN SOURCE REPORTS DECEMBER 31 THAT SOUTHERN LEBANON HAS
HEATED UP IN PAST TWO DAYS. UNMO'S FROM FOUR OP'S HAVE REPORTED
OUTBREAKS OF FIRING BETWEEN CHRISTIAN AND LEFTIST FORCES,
SOME OVER PROLONGED PERIODS.

2. IN NAQOURA AREA, DURING AFTERNOON OF DECEMBER 29, A
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CHRISTIAN FORCE CONSISTING OF ONE TANK, ONE M-113, AND TWO
HALF TRACKS SORTIED OUT FROM AALMA ECH CHAAB, TOOK UP
POSITION OVERLOOKING NAQOURA, AND COMMENCED FIRING. PLO FORCES
AROUND NAQOURA RESPONDED. ACTION LASTED FOR OVER AN HOUR
AND WAS OBSERVED BY BOTH UN STATION AT NAQOURA AND OP LAB.
ON DECEMBER 30, THERE WAS FIRING BETWEEN CHRISTIAN FORCES IN
AALMA ECH CHAAB AND LEFTIST FORCES IN CHAMAA.

3. OP RAS REPORTED SPORADIC ARTILLERY, SMALL ARMS AND AUTOMATIC FIRING ALL DAY DECEMBER 30 BETWEEN CHRISTIAN FORCES AT AIN EBEL AND LEFTIST FORCES IN BENT JBAIL.

4. OP KHIAM REPORTED FIRING FROM CHRISTIAN FORCES IN EL QLAIA AND AROUND EL MERI EAST OF KHIAM ON DECEMBER 29.

5. COMMENT: AFTER LONG PERIOD OF RELATIVE QUIET, THESE TWO DAYS REPORTS REFLECT SIGNIFICANT STEP-UP IN ACTIVITY BETWEEN CHRISTIAN AND LEFTIST IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. ON PERSONAL BASIS, UN SOURCE THOUGHT THAT, IN SEVERAL CASES, FIRING WAS CLEARLY INITIATED BY CHRISTIANS. NO REPORTS OF CROSS-BORDER FIRING OR CONFIRMATION OF IDF INVOLVEMENT ALTHOUGH VILLAGERS IN AALMA ECH CHAAB TELL UNMO'S THAT IDF COMES OVER EVERY NIGHT INTO AREA.
NEWLIN U QUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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